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A FOUR-COMPARTMENT DISSECTION DISH

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The writer has had occasion to do considerable gross dissection of adults of the raisin moth, Ephestia figulilella Greg., and related species for the purpose of specific determinations based on genital characters. For this, as well as for the binocular examination of other insects in fluid, a dish was devised which has proven more satisfactory than any other yet encountered. This consists of a Petri dish within which a bottom, side wall, and partitions dividing the dish into quarters have been constructed from paraffin.

To make the walls, the dish is poured full of melted paraffin. After this has set the compartments are excavated with a scalpel, leaving only the side wall and cross walls. Hot paraffin is then poured into each compartment to form a floor about 1/4 inch thick. After cooling, the floors are scraped down smooth and level.

In segments of triangular design, individual insects may be more readily located through the microscope than in a large circular dish. When the compartments are filled with alcohol or other fluid, its depth is just sufficient to cover the specimens satisfactorily and the area is too small to permit much movement of the suspending medium, so troublesome when large dishes are moved about. Also, 4 compartments are available, all within the same focus of the binocular microscope, to hold separate lots of insects, or into which specimens may be transferred as examination is completed, thus greatly reducing the manipulations necessary when a dish containing a single large compartment is used.



